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SUBJECT: U.S. PARTICIPATION IN MALI'S JUNE 12-13 DONOR
CONFERENCE

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1.(U) Summary. Mali's June 12 - 13 Donor Conference will provide an important opportunity for the USG to showcase our existing \$150 million annual assistance package to Mali and to demonstrate support for greater donor coordination in the sectors in which we are active. We are joined by our European and Canadian colleagues in wanting to restrict the conversation to existing development assistance as opposed to making any new announcements of additional aid. See para 6 for the proposed US Delegation approach during Mali's Donor Conference round table. Request any further guidance from Washington. End Summary.

2.(U) The Malian government will host a round table for development partners in Bamako on June 12-13. The round table is intended to reinforce cooperation between Mali and the international donor community via a two day discussion of a variety of development issues, including Mali's ten-year plan for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and its Strategic Framework for Growth and Poverty Reduction (CSCR). The round table will also examine progress since the last round table donor conference which was held in Geneva in March 2004.

3.(SBU) The Malian government hopes the round table will produce agreement on Mali's ten-year plan to meet the MDGs, the CSCR, and an accepted system for collecting development statistics and indicators. Several senior Malian officials are currently traveling abroad to encourage the attendance of high-level invitees. International donors in Mali, however, have recommended to capitals that delegations be led by local Chiefs of Mission. We therefore recommend that the Ambassador head our delegation, which will also include the USAID Director and the MCC Director in Mali, as well as members of their respective staffs.

4.(SBU) Although the upcoming round table was seemingly intended to serve as a pledging mechanism for the donor community, representatives of the international donor community in Mali have made clear that there is little room for additional pledges. The Malian government is realistic in its expectations, and has therefore focused the agenda on improved donor coordination, the implementation of the Paris Declaration and discussion of appropriate monitoring mechanisms.

5.(U) The agenda for the two days is as follows:

Wednesday, June 11

Official opening dinner

Thursday, June 12

Opening Ceremony

Session 1 : Progress made since the 2004 Round Table
Focus in Session 1 will be on the CSCR, the Paris
Declarations, the Common Strategy of Country Assistance
(SCAP), and governance.

Session 2 : Accelerated growth and the achievement of the MDG
Focus in Session 2 will be on the Accelerated Growth
Strategy, Mali's 10-year plan to meet MDGs, and the extension
of the goals of this MDG plan to the 166 vulnerable communes
under the national food security program (PNSA), and the
economic and social development plan (PDES).

Friday, June 13

Continuation of Session 2

Session 3: Measuring Results
Focus will be on ways to measure CSCR activity.

Session 4: Finance of CSCR and MDG and role of Development
Partners
In addition to the presentation of the CSCR/MDG 2008-2012
plan, this will be the occasion for the heads of delegations
to make a statement about each donor country's participation
in this process.

Session 5: Adoption of a Monitoring Mechanism

Session 6: Wrap-up and Closing

Closing Ceremony

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6.(SBU) There will be several occasions for input from the US
Delegation. During Session 1, we intend to highlight the USG
position on the Paris Declaration, especially our support for
the implementation of a whole-of-government approach to
foreign assistance, the recognition of the importance of
individual country performance, the progressive untying of
aid, and building partnerships that leverage development
finance resources. We will also review commitment to
improving aid effectiveness through our active engagement in
the local donor coordination mechanism (known as the Common
Strategy on Country Assistance or SCAP) and the important
impact of good governance, transparency, and effective
decentralization on Mali's development. During Session 2, we
will review the approaches taken by USAID and MCC in
supporting accelerated economic growth and poverty reduction
in Mali. Session 4 will be an opportunity for the Ambassador
to provide a broader review of the current USD 150 million
annual assistance program and the linkages between these
projects and Mali's stated development goals. We will also
highlight our work with donor coordination, our preference
for project-based vice direct budgetary support, and our
close attention to interlinking and integrating our
development assistance, both within the USG and the broader
donor community. We will support this overview with more
detailed handouts on our actual assistance to Mali.
MCCULLEY